

# **ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

## **Minutes of October 17, 2024 Meeting**

**ACCL, Boardroom, 4:00 pm**

Vice Chair Lynch called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm. Trustees in attendance are Mr. Kurtz, Ms. Ritter, Mr. Woods, Mr. Atwater, Ms. Leitch, Ms. Pratt, Ms. Lynch, Ms. Bogue, Ms. Russell, Ms. Luke, and Ms. Cox. Staff members present were Ms. Bell, Ms. Price, Ms. Mayfield, Ms. Green, Ms. Schumann, Ms. Josey, Ms. Shull, Ms. Ballard, Ms. Lavengood, and Ms. Shimobi-Obijuru. ACCL Foundation Liaison, Ms. McConnell was also present.

### **Announcements:**

Ahead of Director Bell's retirement, Chair Russell read the resolution of Valerie Bell. Ms. Bell thanked staff and Board members for their support.

Assistant Director, Ms. Mayfield, presented Director Bell with bookplates from each county.

Ahead of the end of Ms. Russell's second consecutive term of service on the ACCL Board, Director Bell presented Ms. Russell with a bookplate.

### **Public Comment:**

None

### **Approval of Minutes:**

- The draft minutes of the July 9, 2024 meeting were unanimously approved. (motioned by Mr. Kurtz, seconded by Mr. Woods)

### **Approval of Agenda:**

- The July 9, 2024 meeting agenda was adopted with the following amendment made by Chair Russell:
  - New Business - Recruit additional members for Eastside User Group. Unanimously approved. (motioned by Ms. Hall, seconded by Ms. Carter).

### **Financial Report:**

In Ms. Lavengood's absence, Director Bell gave the report. Trustees were presented with FY25-Q1 financials. Ms. Bell opened the floor for questions regarding the financials.

Ms. Green gave an update regarding the revenue the library is receiving from the passport photobooth. Ms. Bell informed trustees that she wrote a letter to Chris Caldwell explaining that the funds originally reserved for an onsite police officer would have to go towards covering the SHBP increase.

Financial Report FY25-Q1 was unanimously accepted. (motioned by Ms. Luke, seconded by Ms. Pratt.)

### **Committee Reports:**

- **Friends of the Library** - Ms. Green gave the report. She reported that the recent storm affected the operating hours of the book sale. However, even with the unexpected closure, the book sale did well. The Friends are scheduled to meet later today.
- **Winterville** - Ms. Leitch gave the report. She reported that Summer Reading went well. The library had over 21 programs and over 3,000 books were read. The Baby Friendly Book Club is going well. The community is enjoying the local artists exhibit on display in the gallery. Trivia Night was a hit. Ms. Leitch reported that Branch Manager, Deirdre Murray retired. Staff and the Friends celebrated her with a goodbye party. They welcomed Sam Watson as the new Branch Manager. Programming and partnerships continue to go well. Some popular programs include an art show, horror movie trivia, and Treats on the Trail.
- **Foundation** - Ilka McConnell, Vice Chair of the ACCL Foundation, gave the report. She reported that the Foundation has partnered with the Athens Community Foundation and the transfer of funds is complete. They are looking to recruit new members with relevant skills sets. The Foundation is working on a marketing plan for the collection for the East Side Library. They are also looking into potential collaborations with the ACCL Friends and will attend their meeting this evening.
- **Personnel & Nominating** - Ms. Lynch gave the report. She reported that the committee had assembled the following 2025 slate of officers:
  - Rainy Lynch, Chair
  - Natalie Luke, Vice Chair
  - Stephanie Hall, Treasurer

With no further nominations or objections, the 2025 slate of officers was unanimously approved. Motioned by Ms. Cox and seconded by Ms. Pratt. *(Action Item)*

### **Director's Report:**

Ms. Bell gave the report.

- We have received an update on the solar canopies that will be installed in the parking lot. Work will begin soon. The Building and Grounds Committee will be notified about the next meeting.
- She was excited to report that the library will be getting new carpet. The county would like to start the project in January. They would like a plan for the movement of sections before the project starts. The Building and Grounds Committee will be notified of any future meetings.

- Ms. Bell is trying to contact the Alps Elementary SPLOST Coordinator regarding the library's emergency exits. Since the building of the school, the library's emergency exit has not been accessible. She will send another email.
- Many thanks to Ms. Price and all the staff who worked with her. The Annual Report was submitted to the state in a timely manner. Ms. Bell was pleased to see an increase in program attendance and usage. The data shows that we are approaching pre-covid output measures.
- Thanks to Greg Deal and his team the Technology Plan was submitted with the Annual Documents. Board members received a copy.
- Director Bell was pleased to report that Requests for Reconsideration have slowed down. However, we have received open records requests. The library has retained the services of attorney Malcom Mitchell to assist with these matters. Mr. Mitchell is a government attorney and is highly recommended by Julie Walker.
- She continues to work on obtaining a lease from the County and weighing the pros and cons. With a lease, the library would be able to post "No Loitering" signs at the Kathy Ames statue circle area near the bus stop. The downside to obtaining a lease is that we may be responsible for outside insurance costs. This would not be in the best interest of the library. Ms. Bell is in the process of setting up a meeting with county officials, Chair Russell, our attorney, and insurance carrier. Board members will be updated when the meeting is scheduled.
- The budget was approved by ACCUG and the multipurpose rooms will receive a much needed A/V update. This project is expected to happen this month, October 2024.
- Director Bell was proud to report that with the assistance of Assistant Director Sue Plaksin, an application for congressional spending was submitted to Jon Ossoff's office and it has moved forward to the second phase of the appropriations process. Appropriations would be used for a business incubator in the East Side facility. Ms. Bell commended Ms. Plaksin for taking the lead. Board members will be updated as the process moves forward.
- The library held a "Bluey Bash." This event was one of the most successful and well attended events yet. Over 2,000 people attended. She thanked Children's Librarian, Rebecca Ballard, and the entire team that helped make the event a success.
- The *Americans and the Holocaust* Exhibit is coming to the library thanks to the hard work of Assistant Director Trudi Green and her staff. The exhibit will be on display October thru November.
- Ms. Bell gave an update regarding the website accessibility project. Sen Hribal and the technology team are working with the Center for Inclusive Design and Innovation (CIDI). Accessibility issues have been identified, and the next steps will be to fix the issues. The appropriate paperwork has been completed and sent to the Office of Civil Rights. Kaptiv8, our website designer, has agreed to fix the issues free of charge. Mr. Hribal will lead this project. The work needs to be completed by mid-December.
- We have requested 2 million dollars from the state to go towards construction of the East Side branch. The request is on the list for 2026 funding. The

request must be approved by the legislature. Ms Bell will keep the Board updated.

- MRR requests for 2026 are due by October 31, 2024. Ms. Bell requested that the board inform her of any additional requests by the deadline.
- The Regional Board has started the search for the next ARLS Executive Director. They are asking that the application process be closed by 10/10/24, and a search committee be appointed by 10/17/24.
- The Assistant Directors are working closely with Ms. Bell on every project so that they are knowledgeable about all things.

### **Communications:**

None

### **New Business:**

- Chair Russell - There will be upcoming vacant seats on the ACCL Board of Trustees. She asked board members to spread the word.
- The Building & Grounds Committee will be the contact for East Side Library business.

### **Board Actions:**

- Approval of the 2025 Slate of ACCL Board Officers
  - Chairperson, Rainey Lynch
  - Vice Chairperson, Natalie Luke
  - Treasurer, Stephanie Hall

Unanimously approved (motioned by Ms. Cox, seconded by Ms. Pratt).

### **Old Business:**

None

### **Adjourn:**

With no further business, Chair Russell adjourned the meeting at 5:05 **p.m.**  
Unanimously approved without opposition.

### **Next Meeting:**

January 14, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.